

## Charivaria

"SURELY," writes a fifth-form boy, "if Chaucer got away with 'For Frensh of Paris was to hir unknowe,' there needn't be such a fuss if I spell 'accommodate' with one 'e.'"

"What can a man do when he has performed a really marvellous feat and simply cannot tell anyone about it?" asks a novelist. He might send himself a Greetings Telegram.

"There's money in easy-chairs," says a furniture-maker. We know that. The difficulty is to get it out without ripping the upholstery.

A weather expert reminds us that nineteen-thirty-nine has made a very wet start. We fear someone must have neglected to wring out the old year.



"Flies on Secret Mission," runs a news-heading. Where *do* they go in the winter-time?

"I like a man who always whistles when things go wrong," declares a lady-novelist. If this should meet the eye of a football-referee . . .



McILROY in a recent speech. Aren't the last twenty-four a bit risky?

"On my first glimpse of Warsaw," says a traveller, "I got the impression that it was full of tall men." Of course they may have been Telegraph Poles.

"When a child is ill in bed, particularly if its illness is a cold, a hanky is constantly necessary, and is always being mislaid."

*Hendon and Finchley Times and Guardian.*

So what?

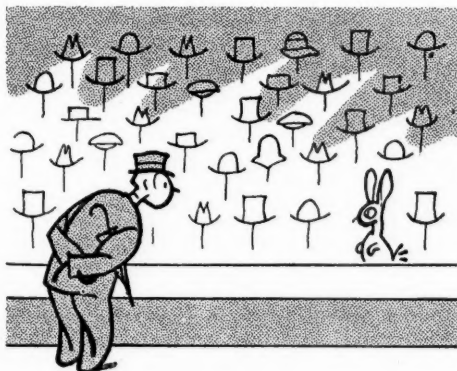
**Things That Might Have Been More Chivalrously Expressed.**

"SCULPTOR RUSHES TO HIS WEDDING  
THEN DASHES BACK TO WORKS OF ART."

*Newcastle Journal.*

"Navvies Form Bridal Archway of Shovels," announces a headline in an evening paper. And the bridegroom of course had his pick on his arm.

A Cubist artist worked for ninety-six hours continuously to paint a picture. And then he found that after all he'd got circles under his eyes.



"U-BOAT TALKS?"

*Daily Telegraph.*

Tell it to the submarines.

"When you move into a new district always let the neighbours call first," advises a writer on etiquette. You then of course have the chance to double.

"The plague to be placed on the house at Goring where Richard Jefferies spent his last days."—*Caption in Provincial Paper.*  
Now put one up at his birthplace and there'll be a plague on both his houses.

In a stage journal a professional conjuror says he buys his top-hats two at a time. One for his tricks and one for his nob.



"Isn't he easily amused?"

### Village Bus à la Française

THE courtyard of Annécý Station lay six inches deep in snow as Roland and I emerged into the chilly dark of a winter Sunday evening. In the middle purred the six o'clock bus, warming up in preparation for the two hours' run up the Haute Savoie mountains to the village of La Clusaz. It already held some dozen peasants returning home after a day on the loose, to say nothing of an atmosphere, compounded of garlic, stale *Celtiques* and *marc*,\* which, as we climbed aboard, closed stiflingly round us like an aged blanket. To this was shortly added an overtone of *Pernod* as the driver came out of the station café and clambered into his seat. Then with a murderous clash of gears we shot out of the yard.

We picked up four more peasants as we rattled through the outskirts of

Annécý. One merry gentleman, with a small *béret* and enormous handlebar moustaches, had evidently spent his day at a political meeting, for on being solicitously steered down the aisle to the back seat—his first intention had been to sit with his arm round the driver—he conceived the impression that he was being conducted through an audience to the speaker's rostrum. So he stood up on arrival and poured out impassioned oratory at the backs of our necks till the driver, getting bored, accelerated suddenly and bumped him back into his seat with a loud hiccup. This happened every time he rose, till finally he gave up, told us all where we could go to and himself went to sleep.

By this time we were grinding up the mountain road with two-foot-deep snow all around. From La Clusaz and other villages above a procession of blinding headlights came streaming down—cars and buses full of skiers

returning to Annécý after a Sunday's sport.

IT was then we encountered the ditched bus. It had been coming down-hill but was now just off the road with its rear wheels up to the axle in snow. It looked to Roland and myself as though it were there for several months. The driver stood disconsolately by, evidently waiting for a breakdown gang; and for no ascertainable reason our driver decided to help. There were vehicles coming down by the score, yet he, driver of the only one going up—and a bus running to schedule at that—just *had* to stop and help. (It turned out later that the other driver was a particular enemy of his, and it was the peculiar Savoyard way of getting even.)

We sat for a while suffering in the cold odorous interior—one of our later passengers had introduced a cheese in a string bag which, after a slow start, was now giving the garlic the fight of its

\*The local liqueur. One might almost call it the local currency.

life—while our driver, with that typical French blend of independence and selfishness, blocked all the traffic by manoeuvring his vehicle round, backing it on to the derelict and connecting up with a rope.

Then both drivers got in. The engines raced. The rope broke: This happened twice. For the third attempt the ditched driver produced a wire cable. He might have done this before; but probably it was *his* way of getting back at our driver. Our driver then called upon us for volunteers to help shove, and we responded nobly. It was something to do, though we were at once up to the knees in snow, and the pure mountain air tasted almost obscene after our ringside seats with the garlic and the cheese.

But we achieved something. The derelict bus heaved, went forward a little, then abruptly slid sideways with racing engine, and finally came to rest further down the hill, still off the road and now jammed against a wayside cherry-tree. When I say jammed I understate the case. The side of the vehicle was against the tree pointing half down-hill, but the front wheels had at the last minute been turned hopefully inwards to the road, so that the tree was, as it were, locked in the bus's lower arm-pit. If the bus had been stationary for years and the tree had grown up through it from seed it couldn't have been immobilised more effectively.

By now we were all hotly debating—raising our voices to be heard above the furious hooting of the held-up ski-ers. The only solution of course was to cut the tree down, but being a French fruit-tree it could not be cut without permission of the owner, who, we gathered, was a certain Père Migaud and lived on a farm nearby. So the two drivers solemnly set off, our man having first moved his bus a little to let the ski-ers pass.

Their remarks as they went by were something fierce, and after ten minutes of it Roland and I, with burning ears, climbed into the bus. We were surprised to find it deserted. We had thought that that was where everyone had gone—to get in out of the cold. Then Roland suddenly realised. Knowing that no deal in Haute Savoie can be put through without a *petit goût de marc* every five minutes, one by one our fellow-passengers must have been drifting up to the farm to help.

HE was right. When we got there ourselves the large living-room was crowded out. Everyone was drinking *marc* and arguing at the top of his voice, for it seemed that Père Migaud

had refused permission to anyone to chop his tree down but was willing to sell it as it stood. So the driver of the derelict was now solemnly engaged in buying the tree, and it was taking quite a time, because of course the tree was Père Migaud's favourite—one that he'd known intimately ever since it was so high. We accepted a *marc* and joined the chorus, which occasionally broke into *patois* and sounded like water-hammer in a faulty tap.

Well, we had a lot more *marc* and bought the tree and went back all jovially chatting together and falling into snow-drifts. Then we found we had no axe and returned *en bloc* to the farm, where we had yet more *marc* and hired, not borrowed, an axe—with a deposit paid on it at that. Again we ploughed back and with merry laughter laid into the tree and soon had it down. Then our driver hitched on—luckily the stream of ski-ers seemed to have stopped—and we once more bent our shoulders to the derelict. The engines raced: the bus came out of the ditch on to the road amid cheers. We said good-bye and clambered into our own. The garlic meanwhile had gone right under to the cheese, but, world-beater though it was, it didn't last long against our *marc*.

We had barely gone a hundred yards when we discovered why the flow of ski-ers had stopped. The driver of a small car, coming round a bend and seeing the two buses by the roadside, had lost his nerve, put on his brakes suddenly, and slewed right across the road, blocking it completely. He had no chains on his wheels and was hav-

ing difficulty in manoeuvring himself straight.

This was child's play to us. We leapt out; we surged round the car as we had surged round the bus; we bent; we said "*Allez-Oop!*" and oop she went.

Fresh from bus-shifting we hadn't realised what a tiny car it was nor how strong the *marc* had made us. That car went up as if it were filled with helium. Indeed I nearly got hit under the chin by the running-board. I saw the complete length of Roland on the far side. I saw all the hidden intimacies of the car's underneath. I saw the frightened open mouth of the girl-passenger peering over the side at us from high above.

With a sudden roar of laughter we let it down and laughed and laughed. It still wasn't straight, and one of us, not quite so helpless with mirth, put one hand under the front bumper and swung it contemptuously into position. It must have been the lightest car ever made and we'd given it the works as though it were a three-ton lorry.

WE piled, still laughing, into our bus, leaving behind us in the car probably the most surprised young couple in all France.

All the rest of the way explosive chuckles kept breaking out, and when we reached La Clusaz an hour-and-a-half late we were just one large family and—except for the man with the cheese, whom we dodged—adjourned to the bar of the "*Lion d'Or*" to tell the story over again. With more *marc*.

A. A.



"I'm Mr. Fish; Mr. Chips is out at the moment."





"Isn't he easily amused?"

### Village Bus à la Française

THE courtyard of Annécý Station lay six inches deep in snow as Roland and I emerged into the chilly dark of a winter Sunday evening. In the middle purred the six o'clock bus, warming up in preparation for the two hours' run up the Haute Savoie mountains to the village of La Clusaz. It already held some dozen peasants returning home after a day on the loose, to say nothing of an atmosphere, compounded of garlic, stale *Celtiques* and *marc*,\* which, as we climbed aboard, closed stiflingly round us like an aged blanket. To this was shortly added an overtone of *Pernod* as the driver came out of the station café and clambered into his seat. Then with a murderous clash of gears we shot out of the yard.

We picked up four more peasants as we rattled through the outskirts of

Annécý. One merry gentleman, with a small *béret* and enormous handlebar moustaches, had evidently spent his day at a political meeting, for on being solicitously steered down the aisle to the back seat—his first intention had been to sit with his arm round the driver—he conceived the impression that he was being conducted through an audience to the speaker's rostrum. So he stood up on arrival and poured out impassioned oratory at the backs of our necks till the driver, getting bored, accelerated suddenly and bumped him back into his seat with a loud hiccup. This happened every time he rose, till finally he gave up, told us all where we could go to and himself went to sleep.

By this time we were grinding up the mountain road with two-foot-deep snow all around. From La Clusaz and other villages above a procession of blinding headlights came streaming down—cars and buses full of ski-ers

returning to Annécý after a Sunday's sport.

IT was then we encountered the ditched bus. It had been coming down-hill but was now just off the road with its rear wheels up to the axle in snow. It looked to Roland and myself as though it were there for several months. The driver stood disconsolately by, evidently waiting for a breakdown gang; and for no ascertainable reason our driver decided to help. There were vehicles coming down by the score, yet he, driver of the only one going up—and a bus running to schedule at that—just *had* to stop and help. (It turned out later that the other driver was a particular enemy of his, and it was the peculiar Savoyard way of getting even.)

We sat for a while suffering in the cold odorous interior—one of our later passengers had introduced a cheese in a string bag which, after a slow start, was now giving the garlic the fight of its

\* The local liqueur. One might almost call it the local currency.



life—while our driver, with that typical French blend of independence and selfishness, blocked all the traffic by manœuvring his vehicle round, backing it on to the derelict and connecting up with a rope.

Then both drivers got in. The engines raced. The rope broke. This happened twice. For the third attempt the ditched driver produced a wire cable. He might have done this before; but probably it was *his* way of getting back at our driver. Our driver then called upon us for volunteers to help shove, and we responded nobly. It was something to do, though we were at once up to the knees in snow, and the pure mountain air tasted almost obscene after our ringside seats with the garlic and the cheese.

But we achieved something. The derelict bus heaved, went forward a little, then abruptly slid sideways with racing engine, and finally came to rest further down the hill, still off the road and now jammed against a wayside cherry-tree. When I say jammed I understate the case. The side of the vehicle was against the tree pointing half down-hill, but the front wheels had at the last minute been turned hopefully inwards to the road, so that the tree was, as it were, locked in the bus's lower arm-pit. If the bus had been stationary for years and the tree had grown up through it from seed it couldn't have been immobilised more effectively.

By now we were all hotly debating—raising our voices to be heard above the furious hooting of the held-up ski-ers. The only solution of course was to cut the tree down, but being a French fruit-tree it could not be cut without permission of the owner, who, we gathered, was a certain Père Migaud and lived on a farm nearby. So the two drivers solemnly set off, our man having first moved his bus a little to let the ski-ers pass.

Their remarks as they went by were something fierce, and after ten minutes of it Roland and I, with burning ears, climbed into the bus. We were surprised to find it deserted. We had thought that that was where everyone had gone—to get in out of the cold. Then Roland suddenly realised. Knowing that no deal in Haute Savoie can be put through without a *petit goût de marc* every five minutes, one by one our fellow-passengers must have been drifting up to the farm to help.

HE was right. When we got there ourselves the large living-room was crowded out. Everyone was drinking *marc* and arguing at the top of his voice, for it seemed that Père Migaud

had refused permission to anyone to chop his tree down but was willing to sell it as it stood. So the driver of the derelict was now solemnly engaged in buying the tree, and it was taking quite a time, because of course the tree was Père Migaud's favourite—one that he'd known intimately ever since it was so high. We accepted a *marc* and joined the chorus, which occasionally broke into *patois* and sounded like water-hammer in a faulty tap.

Well, we had a lot more *marc* and bought the tree and went back all jovially chatting together and falling into snow-drifts. Then we found we had no axe and returned *en bloc* to the farm, where we had yet more *marc* and hired, not borrowed, an axe—with a deposit paid on it at that. Again we ploughed back and with merry laughter laid into the tree and soon had it down. Then our driver hitched on—luckily the stream of ski-ers seemed to have stopped—and we once more bent our shoulders to the derelict. The engines raced: the bus came out of the ditch on to the road amid cheers. We said good-bye and clambered into our own. The garlic meanwhile had gone right under to the cheese, but, world-beater though it was, it didn't last long against our *marc*.

We had barely gone a hundred yards when we discovered why the flow of ski-ers had stopped. The driver of a small car, coming round a bend and seeing the two buses by the roadside, had lost his nerve, put on his brakes suddenly, and slewed right across the road, blocking it completely. He had no chains on his wheels and was hav-

ing difficulty in manœuvring himself straight.

This was child's play to us. We leapt out; we surged round the car as we had surged round the bus; we bent; we said "*Allez-Oop!*" and oop she went.

Fresh from bus-shifting we hadn't realised what a tiny car it was nor how strong the *marc* had made us. That car went up as if it were filled with helium. Indeed I nearly got hit under the chin by the running-board. I saw the complete length of Roland on the far side. I saw all the hidden intimacies of the car's underneath. I saw the frightened open mouth of the girl-passenger peering over the side at us from high above.

With a sudden roar of laughter we let it down and laughed and laughed. It still wasn't straight, and one of us, not quite so helpless with mirth, put one hand under the front bumper and swung it contemptuously into position. It must have been the lightest car ever made and we'd given it the works as though it were a three-ton lorry.

WE piled, still laughing, into our bus, leaving behind us in the car probably the most surprised young couple in all France.

All the rest of the way explosive chuckles kept breaking out, and when we reached La Clusaz an hour-and-a-half late we were just one large family and—except for the man with the cheese, whom we dodged—adjourned to the bar of the "*Lion d'Or*" to tell the story over again. With more *marc*.

A. A.



"I'm Mr. Fish; Mr. Chips is out at the moment."



"Of course I entirely agree with you. But which crisis is it you mean?"

### *I Love the Rich*

**I** LOVE the rich, I don't care what you say!

I like to see the pretty creatures dressed  
From top to toe in Schiaparelli's best.

I love the way

They smell of "Je ne sais quoi" or "Dans la Nuit,"

Or other perfumes redolent of vice  
Not to be sniffed this side of Paradise

By such as we.

They look so nice and clean. Their teeth and hair

Command attention few of us afford.

Still let us joy that some one walks abroad  
In good repair.

I like their houses, carpeted and snug,  
Where baths abound and radiators sprout,  
Where footmen humbly kneel to straighten out  
The drawing-room rug.

I do not grudge them caviar at Quag's,  
Or envy them their silent gleaming cars  
In which they drive to charity bazaars

With bulging bags.

Why should they suffer even mild reproaches?  
Placed in a world as drab as dungaree,  
Do they not add a touch of pageantry?

Their rings and brooches

Shine as the dazzling symbols of success,  
And with success in view how shall we pause?  
Shall we not strive to be its conquerors?

I tell you Yes!

The wealthy set a jewelled standard which  
We feel we should and must and will attain,  
So I repeat, although it sounds profane,

I love the rich!

V. G.

### *Assistant Masters: Are They Insane?*

*A further extract from the papers of A. J. Wentworth*

**A**FTER the bustle and excitement of the first day of Term it was a real shock to me to be informed quite casually by Gilbert this morning that he is taking over eleven o'clock milkers. Eleven o'clock milkers is our name here for the distribution of milk during break to certain boys whose parents have expressed a wish that they should have it, and for years it has been my prerogative to tick off the names of these boys as they come up for their glasses. The last thought in my mind as I entered Common Room after breakfast was that any change could be contemplated in this arrangement—certainly not without consulting me.

Of course I went straight off to the Headmaster the moment I heard of it.

I found him interviewing some parents who had brought their boy, a new boy, down a day late, and would have withdrawn at once, but Mr. Saunders beckoned me in.

"Ah, Wentworth!" he cried, "I'm glad you looked in. Mr. Wentworth is one of our little community of assistant-masters, Mrs. Carter—a very happy little community, eh, Wentworth? I'm sure he will help Johnny all he can."

"How do you do, Mrs. Carter?" I said. "We will certainly do our best to put young Johnny on the right road. You need have no doubt that he will be happy here at Burgrove—and work hard, won't you, Johnny?"

The little boy made no reply, and I turned to his father. "Why, Mr. Carter," I exclaimed admiringly, "he's the living image of you!"

"I should have introduced you," put in Mrs. Carter, colouring prettily. "This is Captain Ferguson, a very kind friend who motored us down."

It would have been the work of a moment to cover up this little misunderstanding, but in stepping backwards to address a remark about the mild weather to Mrs. Carter I had the misfortune to tread on her boy's foot, who had somehow got round behind me in that irritating way young people have. Naturally I apologised, but he burst into tears, and indeed made a most unnecessary fuss about the incident.

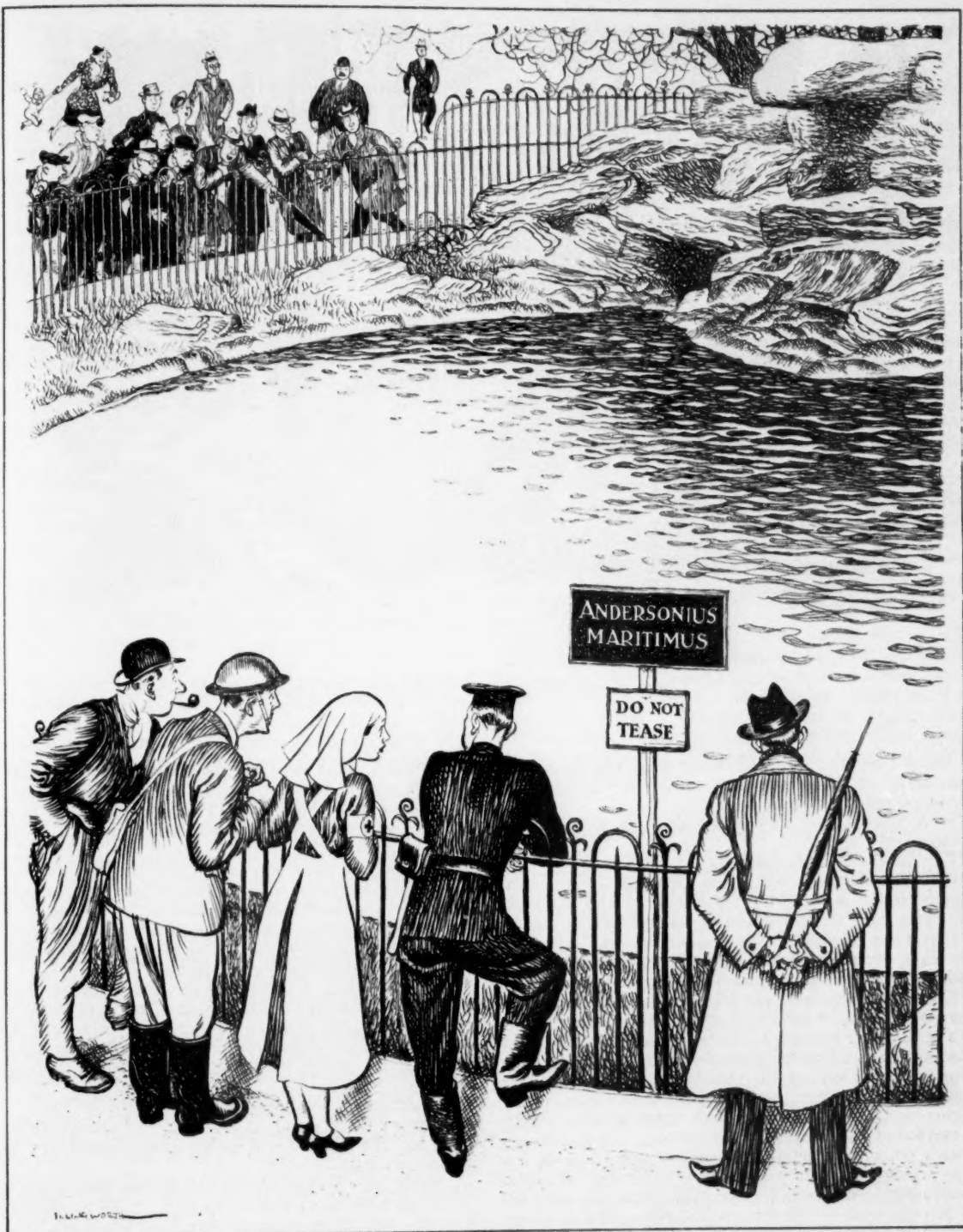
"Come, come, Johnny," I said kindly. "You are a big boy now. You must learn to put up with a few hard knocks now you have come to Burgrove."

"Why is that, Mr. Wentworth?" cried his mother, mistaking my meaning. "Do you make a point of treading on the boys' feet at this school?"

"No, Mrs. Carter," I replied, turning the point neatly, though perfectly politely, against her. "We teach the boys to stand on their own feet at Burgrove."

"Well, Wentworth," said the Headmaster, rather shortly for him, "is there anything you want to see me about?"

"Nothing that will not keep until you are free, thank you, Headmaster," I replied, and with a smile that included them all I turned on my heel and walked into a maidenhair fern which Mr. Saunders, rashly as I think, keeps on a tall stand by the door. Only great quickness on my part saved the pot from falling to the floor, and finding myself with the fern in my arms I decided that the best thing to do was to walk straight out with it, pretending that I had meant all along to take it with me. This naturally made it impossible for me to shut the door, and thus as I walked through the swing-door into the boys' part of the house I overheard Mrs. Carter make a remark which I greatly resented. Nothing is to be gained by repeating it here.



### THE PRIVY SEAL

"They say he's due to come up any time now."





*"You've really got to hear Wagner in the flesh."*

I had a busy day and had almost forgotten the trifling annoyances of the morning, when the Headmaster summoned me to his study.

"Well, Wentworth," he began, "have you any explanation to offer?"

"Explanation?" I stammered.

"Of your rudeness to one of our parents and your extraordinary action in removing an ornament from my room without permission and without explanation of any kind?"

"If you are referring to the maidenhair fern," I replied, controlling myself with difficulty, "I can only say that I should have thought my reasons for taking it were obvious."

"Not to me," he said, and added that even if he could conceive some object for which a fern was necessary in my day's work, as for example to illustrate some scientific point to the boys or as a drawing model—though it would be news to him to learn that I was concerned with the teaching either of science or drawing at Burgrove, even so he still could not imagine that the need was of such urgency as to justify the methods I had adopted to acquire one. He had heard, he went on, of men subject to sudden ungovernable impulses which made the possession of some desired object a paramount consideration, but if that was the explanation he only wished I had given him some inkling of my desire for a maidenhair fern. He could then have had one placed in my room at the beginning of term and this deplorable incident would have been avoided. But on the whole, he said, he preferred to think that my action was simply a particularly mistaken and ill-timed piece of clowning.

"If that is what you think, Headmaster," I burst out at last, "I have no option but to resign my position here. I have spent many happy and I like to think not unproductive years, at Burgrove, and I shall be sorry, more than sorry, to go—"

"We shall be sorry to lose you, Wentworth."

"There is no reason why you *should* lose me," I rejoined warmly. "The whole ridiculous incident has been magnified out of all proportion. I will go and fetch this precious fern *now*. That I should be accused at my age of kleptomania and—and clownishness—is incredible!"

Blind with rage I turned to the door, but as ill luck would have it caught my foot against the fern-stand and went down heavily against a table of silver spoons and other small bric-à-brac. When I rose to my feet, still automatically clutching the stand, there were tears of mortification in my eyes.

"Headmaster—" I began.

"Leave me the stand, Wentworth," he cried, "at least leave me the stand!" and to my amazement I saw that he was smiling.

I would have spoken, but he checked me with a gesture.

"Never mind about it now," he said. "We'll talk about it later. And let me have my fern back when you've finished with it, won't you?"

I said good-night, and as I walked away a great gale of laughter followed me down the corridor. I went to my room to write up this diary with my mind in a whirl.

H. F. E.

## Speech Reaction

THE recent speech of the President of Hexagonia concerning the ping-pong situation had marked effects in neighbouring countries.

It was the passage in which the President suggested a slight modification of the rules of the game ("It is the opinion of some of us here," he said, "that the penalties for over-hitting might be lightened"\*) that seemed most to annoy Pentagonia. The newspaper *Monötmy* declared: "This farrago of filth, this pailful of dirty lies is only what might have been expected from the elected representative of a degenerate and cretinous democracy. His screams of hate leave us entirely unmoved. We spit on him calmly."

A similar note was struck by the newspaper *Pütü Brij* (formerly published in Decagonia, but annexed, with everything else in the country, by Octagonia). "Nothing can exceed our lack of interest, our complete unconcern," it announced, "at the bellows of animal-like savagery emitted by the Hexagonian President in his recent thinly-veiled attack upon this country. The noble destiny of Octagonia cannot be affected by the hysterical bestiality of a mud-caked cart-horse."

Zoologically different, the views of Tetrahedronia were in essence the same. The newspaper *Hichi-Ku* said: "This democratic snake hisses and exudes his venom, but the flickerings of his forked tongue fail to alarm Tetrahedronia. As we call out our noblest and biggest guns to pulverise his viperous head, as he is consumed utterly in the mighty conflagration of our generous wrath, we may truly say, 'Mister, we did not notice you were there.'"

AS these first examples of what might be called uninterested fury died down all three countries set themselves to discover the motives behind the President's speech. They seemed to agree that one of his aims was to stir up trouble between them, though they did not agree on the particular passages devoted to this end.

*Pütü Brij*, for example, declared that his words about the size of the ball covered an attempt of great subtlety to focus popular attention on inessentials while he sent a small army into Octagonia. "Our childish schemer," it went on, "fails to allow for ordinary commonsense in his hearers. With our keen virile eyes we see through this manoeuvre."

*Monötmy* said, "Wool cannot be pulled over our eyes by any dirty Hexagonian thug. Our people will know what to make of this person's crafty statements about over-hitting, which are nothing but a cloak for his plan to wage a dishonest and bestial war."

What *Hichi-Ku* said can merely be adumbrated, for all the Tetrahedronian papers of that particular day were confiscated and burned owing to the censor's having overlooked a small paragraph dealing with the kind of cough-mixture favoured by the Leader. (It was not considered expedient to publish the name, for fear that people might suppose he had a cough, or that, having a cough, he would use cough-mixture, or that, using a cough-mixture, he would use this one, which sold as a result of peculiarly half-witted though effective advertisements.)

Roughly then—even more roughly than usual—*Hichi-Ku* demanded some kind of death penalty for the Hexagonian President because, it alleged, in the part of his speech dealing with the height of umpires he had clearly hinted

that if all umpires were Tetrahedronian he would kill every umpire in existence. In the Tetrahedronian language the word "umpire" sounds something like the word "empire" (can you imagine that?) and *Hichi-Ku* construed the President's remarks as a threat to annex the Rhom-Boid Islands, ceded to Tetrahedronia in 1678 by the Treaty of Oblöng.

(The actual passage of the speech referred to here was, "As is well known, we have to have umpires. Some are better than others"—(laughter)—"and some, of course, are worse." (Loud laughter.) "The best ones perhaps are the tallest, and for those you have to go to Tetrahedronia." This was the only mention of umpires.)

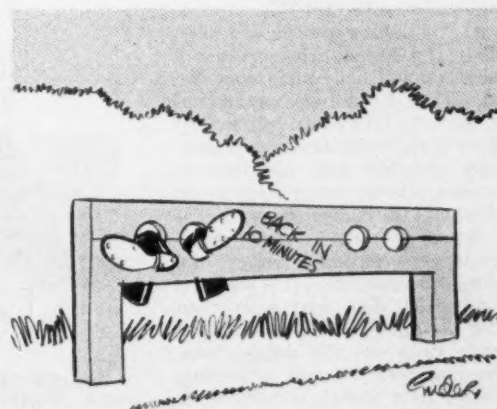
One point the newspapers of all three countries seemed to agree upon—by the third day, when an attitude of more leisurely criticism was possible—was that the Hexagonian President had made a futile attempt to interfere with the course of what they described as history. Each appeared to regard history as a sort of express train on which nobody else was riding.

"The besotted fool," as *Hichi-Ku* described him, "seeks to interpose his feeble carcass between the mighty Tetrahedronian people and their tumultuous destiny." (The translation here is perhaps at fault.)

"What are we to think of such a stupid ape," as *Monötmy* more delicately put it, "when by weak posturings and nasty lies he endeavours to turn aside the inevitable march of events?"

*Pütü Brij* was sarcastic. "We thank the so-called Hexagonian President for his muck-heap of falsehoods," it announced, "for he has shown us by it to what depths democracy may descend in its hopeless efforts to check the course of fate." This paper ended its leading article with a quotation from Octagonian literature, which may be roughly translated, "The big stiff is a poor sap," said Biliwili the joiner's apprentice."

ALL this exasperated the Hexagonian President, who really had been talking about the ping-pong situation and nothing else. However, as an alert and inquisitive experimentalist, he proposes to make a speech shortly in which he will say nothing but "One and one, I believe, are two." It is feared that this may start a war. R. M.



\* Ping-pong is not the same as table-tennis, as so many people have so indignantly pointed out.

## Misleading Cases

### The Sandwich Case

#### *Rex v. Haddock and the Friendly Feeding Place*

"IS an indiarubber sandwich a meal? Can the same sandwich be consumed twice? What is the meaning of 'with'?"

These and other fascinating questions engaged the attention of the House of Lords to-day when they heard the appeal of a restaurateur, Mr. Haddock, from a conviction under the Licensing Acts for supplying intoxicating liquor after permitted hours. The sandwich has once or twice been the subject of legal argument, but this is believed to be its first appearance in the House of Lords.

At the trial the defendant relied upon Section 5 (d) of the Licensing Act, 1921, which provides as follows:—

"Nothing in the foregoing provisions of this part of this Act shall be deemed to prohibit or restrict . . .

(d) the consumption of intoxicating liquor with a meal by any person on any licensed premises or club at any time within half an hour after the conclusion of the permitted hours, provided that the liquor was supplied during permitted hours and served at the same time as the meal and for consumption at the meal."

It has been held by inferior Courts that a sandwich constitutes "a meal" under this section; and a regular sandwich-practice has long been established in many places of refreshment. After the normal end of the "permitted hours," and sometimes before, the waiters have instructions to refuse to serve intoxicating drink unless at the same time the customer orders a ham-sandwich. There is no pretence on either side that the customer desires a ham-sandwich or intends to consume it; but the law is supposed to be satisfied. If a second drink is ordered a second sandwich is (and must be) served, although the first remains uneaten. At last, if the party is numerous and merry, the table becomes embarrassingly crowded with unconsumed sandwiches, and the waiter is requested or volunteers to remove them. Yet if more drinks are ordered more sandwiches must be ordered, served and paid for; and sometimes, it is said, the same sandwich does duty more than once for the same customer, and earns a double price for the restaurateur. The restaurateur, though objecting, ostensibly, to a foolish restriction, is

not always so hostile as he appears, for when custom is good and the will to drink robust he can make an extra profit on the sandwiches and blame it on the law.

Mr. Haddock (who is new to the refreshment world, at least as a licensee) told the Court of original jurisdiction that at first he had loyally complied with what appeared to be the letter of the law and the custom of the trade. But he had soon rebelled against the folly of the one and the rapacity of the other. Further, he said, it shocked him to see good food untasted and often thrown away when many hungry fellow-citizens were crying for bread. He therefore divided his sandwiches into two classes—Eating Sandwiches and Drinking Sandwiches. His waiters were instructed to ask the customer politely whether he genuinely wished to eat a sandwich. If the answer was "Yes" he was given a good sandwich and charged a fair price for it. If the answer was "No" he was given an indiarubber sandwich and charged nothing at all. The indiarubber sandwiches of course were kept in quantities and used again and again; waste was thus avoided and no harm was done to anyone. But Mr. Haddock's proceedings were heard of: and a warning was conveyed to him. Mr. Haddock, so far from complying, served an indiarubber sandwich to a police-inspector. He was convicted, but appealed, and has continued so to do in order that the law of sandwiches might be tested and pronounced upon by the very highest tribunal in the land.

THE Lord Chancellor, in the course of his judgment, said: "It seems to

me that if the words of the Act are to be interpreted literally and strictly Parliament must be taken to have enjoined a course of action which is impossible. The section permits 'the consumption of intoxicating liquor with a meal.' Now, there are two questions here: First, what is the meaning of 'with'? and, second, What is the meaning of 'meal'?"

"If the liquor is to be consumed with the meal the natural meaning is that the meal also must be consumed (not merely served). In other words, if the meal and the liquor are lawfully served together but the meal is not in fact consumed, then any consumption of liquor becomes unlawful and both the supplier and the consumer have committed an offence.

"Let us pass, then, to the word 'meal.' In the general usage of our land a meal is one of the recognised repasts of the day, namely, breakfast, luncheon, tea, dinner or supper. I think that the sitting position is essential to a 'meal': those who stand and nibble buns at a railway bar or bijou sausages at a cocktail-party are not, I think, strictly partaking of a meal. It is a solid, organised affair, as opposed to a casual snack.

"So that, on its natural interpretation, the section seems to mean that liquor may lawfully be supplied and consumed if the customer is not merely served with but *consumes* a solid meal, such as luncheon, dinner or supper, as well.

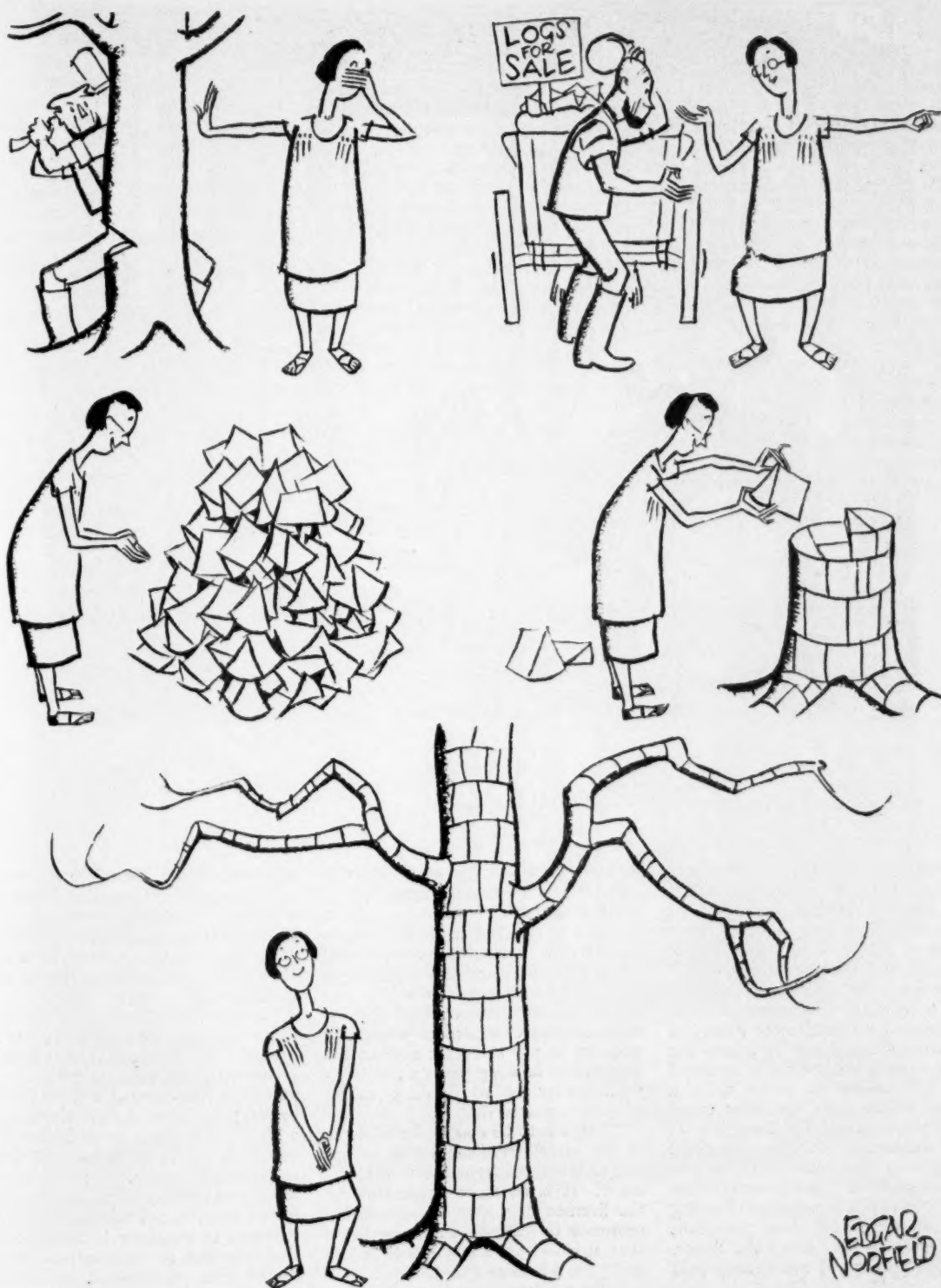
"But, my Lords, how is such a provision to be enforced? The table may be prepared for a banquet, the waiters numerous, the bill-of-fare long: all the appurtenances of a 'meal' are present. But the appetite may be rebellious or the customer cunning. The invalid may sit down willing and eager to eat like a schoolboy, but after a spoonful of soup his stomach fails him and he can eat no more. Has he 'consumed a meal'? And if not, does his single glass of sherry become now an offence against the law? Or one can imagine a millionaire, arriving at the hostelry at, say, five minutes short of eleven, not hungry but very thirsty. He can afford, and he does not scruple to command, a prolonged and complicated repast, which he does not intend to consume, in order to squeeze from the law the single glass of liquid refreshment that he does desire.

"These may be extreme and special



"Will you please repeat that there last remark, Mister?"





RE-AFFORESTATION



### At Home

The Author

cases, but they will serve to illuminate a difficulty which is general and, I think, inescapable. How is the licensee to determine how many courses, what number of mouthfuls or nibbles mark the juridical consumption of a meal? And, when he has so determined, how is he to compel the consumption of that magical amount before a drop of the intoxicating liquor is taken—for that is what it must come to strictly? Only by placing at every table a sentinel waiter who, counting every mouthful, would say, like the governors of our childhood, 'Naughty, naughty! Eat up your bread-and-butter or you will have no drink.' And it would follow that if the requisite measure of eating were not performed these guardians would have to take away the liquor, although, perhaps, it was already paid for.

"Some public scorn has been cast, I understand, upon the magistrate who

first decided that a sandwich was sufficient to constitute a meal. But I think that, up to a point, he was right. He was right, that is, in refusing to insist upon a narrow interpretation and a lengthy bill-of-fare. The intention of the Legislature was presumably to pay respect to the common belief that intoxicating liquor acts more powerfully upon an empty stomach; and for the purposes of blotting paper a few sandwiches may be as effective as an expensive cooked dish.

"But it is to be observed that some of the same practical difficulties are attached to this interpretation as to the other. It is no more practicable for the licensee or waiter to compel his customer to consume a ham-sandwich than it is to force a four-course dinner down his reluctant gullet.

"The conclusion must now be clear. The section, strictly read, commands impossibilities: and *lex non cogit*

*ad impossibilia*. Therefore the section must not be strictly read: and, unless it is to lapse into nothing, which would be unfortunate, it must be read in some other way. The magistrates have done their best: your Lordships' House must do better.

"*Omnia præsumuntur pro bibente*. I think that here we have to look at the *intention* of the parties; and it must be presumed that no reasonable man would pay for a ham-sandwich if he did not intend to consume it. But that applies with as much force to an indiarubber sandwich as to a bread-sandwich—perhaps with more. Once it is conceded that proof of actual consumption of 'the meal' is not necessary, that the *intention* to consume is the test and that intention to consume is to be presumed from purchase, it must follow logically that the law need not concern itself with the particular quality or dimensions of the meal. In other words,

for the purpose of this section, an india-rubber sandwich is as good as any other. Mr. Haddock, as usual, is guiltless, and the appeal must be allowed."

Lord Plush said: "I agree. As a matter of fact there is a good deal of evidence that for the purposes of averting intoxication an indiarubber sandwich is more effective than a bread one. But that does not arise."

Lord Arrowroot said: "I agree; but for different reasons. The expression 'square meal' is well known. It is something different from 'a meal.' If our beloved Legislature had meant a 'square meal' they would have said so. They did not. They said 'a meal.' The appeal must be allowed."

Lord Rattle said: "I agree. The whole thing is bilge."

Lord Fish said: "I do not agree. I cannot swallow the indiarubber sandwich." His Lordship read a dissenting judgment, but no one paid the smallest attention.

The appeal was allowed. A. P. H.

## Escape Them Never

AS I told the doctor, I am not one of those who dislike the winter. "If it were not for colds," I said, "I prefer it to summer in many ways. At least we expect winter to be wintry, and in consequence its few fine days are surprising and pleasing beyond measure; whereas, expecting summer to be summerlike, we are continually disappointed!"

The doctor, struggling to pouch his stethoscope, smiled absently. "Well, well, well," he said most unsuitably, "we civilised folk are but foolish creatures. We live in a vitiated, germ-laden city atmosphere for eleven months out of the twelve, and still expect to keep well. These colds of yours—what you need is pure air to build up your powers of resistance. What about a month in Switzerland, now? Winter sports, eh?"

Within a week I was in an exalted world of exquisite sunlight and de-

licious dazzling dry snow, enhanced by blue shadows. Within two weeks I was master of both my skis and could kick off with my left skate almost as well as with my right one. Four weeks later I was at home, bronzed, fit, ten years younger and as strong as a lion.

Two days after my return I was waked early by the discomfort of a too-familiar feeling at the back of the nose. It COULDN'T be! But it was.

"Another cold! Well, well, well!" sympathised the doctor, true to form. "Still, I'm not really surprised, you know. It is only natural that when you have spent a month in a pure, germ-free atmosphere all your powers of resistance to infection, becoming unnecessary, decline. Immediately you come in contact with infection again your weakened resistance is overcome. Now in your case perhaps a course of injections might . . ."

I turned my face to the wall.



"For some time past there have been strained relations between my husband and certain parts of Europe."





"Do you know anything about carburettors, M'Lady?"

## The Romance of a Plumber

Lucy Takes a Chance

DEAR GEORGE,—Am glad to say Lucy appears to have overcome the green eyed monster jealousy. It happened like this. Three Sats ago I had been waiting outside a shop for half an hour and Lucy while she just popped in for a moment dear when who hoves into view but my ex prospective bride Ivy looking one hundred percent It. I said hi and a little shifty fellow said me? I havent taken anything, not far anyway. My dear Sir I said, whether you take umbrage or poison is all the same to me, kindly push off.

Ivy came up and said this is a nace surprise Willy boy, how is the wafe? Why this nace wafe business I said, are you demonstrating a mincing machine or what? May talent was spotted at a local competition she said, and ay now do a hideho turn at The One Over which is a nate club for ladies and gents and anyone else who cares to come. I suppose your head will soon be too big for your hat I said. No she said, although of course that is now the fashion, ay am carrying on as usual.

Then Lucy came out and said that is a nice thing for an also ran to say to the winners husband, carrying on as usual. Lucy Lucy I said, it is often not so much what people say as the nasty way you listen. Well she said, when I see a girl doing the heavy in a minx coat I have my doubts. About what? Ivy said. About what way she got it Lucy said. Listen Lucy Ivy said, ay am not inclined to copy Mr. Chamberlain and courteously refrain from using may umbrella, so watch out. Lucy my pet I said, Ivy is now a crooner, that is all. Really indeed? Lucy said, judging by how she throws herself at men she would be trifle as a

circus strong woman. Two passers by helped separate them and a boy rushed up and said can I apply a tourniquet anywhere? that is all I have learnt as yet but would like to practice.

There is no need for jealousy Lucy I said, no doubt Ivy sees plenty of young men abt town at the club. No Ivy said, mostly the customers are married gentlemen who come to forget. Forget what? Lucy said. Themselves usually ay sorry to say Ivy said, in fact ay think of getting a manager to look after may finances and keep comehithery customers at bay, do you know a good man? There is no such thing Lucy said, even on the stage they are character parts now, come William away.

You men Lucy said, I wouldnt trust any of you further than I could throw St. Pauls cathedral if as far, its all very well coming home late and saying youve been plumbing but. It is funny I said, wives do not mind how long husbands are away from home in the day but a slight delay at night means hell or a hat bill to pay. Incidentally I said, your exflame Alfred nightwatches, how do I know he doesnt take you out by day? Of course he doesnt Lucy said, often. Well I said, that is a bombshell in a nutshell that is. We go to the films Lucy said, but only U ones, he always behaves like a gentleman because I keep telling him to.

Kindly remember the late Penelope I said, when her husband went cruising and fellows called and said be a sport and come out she always said sorry boys but I must finish my knitting. Exactly Lucy said, if you went on a cruise alone when you come back I would give you socks too. Anyway I said, what with you being suspicious of me and Ivy and me of Alfred and you you and me are all set for happiness I dont think. Look Lucy said, if Alfred could get the job of Ivys manager, human nature being what it unfortunately is they will probably fall into loves torrential stream and so end our troubles.

So I told Alfred and he said I do not like working for a woman although I know most married men do, what is she



"What caused you to commit bigamy?"  
"Monogamy, M'Lord."

like? A beautiful blonde I said, even though she has a dark past and parting. Ah women women women he said, they will be the death of me but oh what a wonderful death, lead on Macbeth. His boss gave him a reference viz while in my employ the bearer has done nothing which makes me hesitate to recommend him for any job, Signed J. Smith (Mr.), and you had to look very close to see that Alfred had deleted a comma after nothing, but Lucy said so long as he knows where to stop Ivy wont worry about his punctuation.

Well George Alfred got the job and reported steady progress on the matrimonial front and last week he sent us an invite to the place. We decided to unbend and go and when we got there Alfred steered us through the atmosphere smoke etc and said you see that fellow there? six nights running he has been here, he just knocks them back until Ivy appears and then his eyes light up, on Monday he sent her flowers and on Tues some aspirin to revive them, there is no doubt he is gone on her and viceversa, my hopes of being a June bridegroom are tapering off something chronic.

What is he? Lucy said. A journalist Alfred said. I know these journalists Lucy said, the last thing they want published is the banns, let me get to work on him. So we went and sat next this fellow and Lucy got talking by saying arent you Mr. Spencer Tracy in cognito? No he said blushing, not as far as I know, I am on the daily soandso and write the headlines which are the most important part as most of our so called readers can only spell out large print. Father used to read it Lucy said. Used? he said, is he now the late? Oh no Lucy said, he now takes an intelligent interest in things, no throwing please.

Then the manager came out and said ladies and gents, pipe down on the roll of drums Joe, I have pleasure in presenting Mimi Cadenza and on came Ivy looking as fetching as a brace of retrievers although it was certainly folly to come on in what she came on in because she might easily of caught a nasty cold through so many gentlemen creating a draught saying whew. She sang a song about you kinda get me you wonderful man, as only someone very extra super special can, and such few wives as there were said dont you think its time we went dear? but the husbands said the night is yet young and I do not feel so old either, another magnum waiter.

My Mimi sings like a B.B.C. nightingale this fellow said, I would dearly love to see her on my family tree. Personally I said, I think if she is ever jailed she could use her voice to file her way out with. Some people have no eye for good music he said, and then something about Phyllis Tyne who I suppose was another girl friend.

Well George Lucy started talking to this fellow very quiet and suddenly he went pale and out. The unprintable noun Ivy said, he didnt even say good bye. Mimi said the manager, he didnt even pay the bill, I fear he is no boomerang.

So that was that and yesterday Alfred called and said I am glad to say that that fellow never recame, it broke Ivys heart so I proposed to her while her circulation was weak and she accepted so everything in the garden is Mr. Middleton, but I would like to know what Lucy said to make that fellow go off like what he did.

Well Lucy said, when he said doesnt she look beautiful? I simply said I suppose so in this light, you wouldnt think to look at her she was old enough to be my mother would you? But she isnt Alfred said. I never said she was Lucy said, but I took the chance because I remembered when Father used to read the daily soandso he always said the trouble with this perishing paper is that no one on it will ever stop to learn the truth.

Well George I suppose ere long Alfred will be finding

what most of us ex bachelors find viz a wife usually gives her husband the best jeers of her life. I hope you are well and am

Your affect. friend

WILLIAM TWISS.

P.S.—Yes George I know its a shame they give our school kids Shakespeare to do so that when they grow up they dont think much of it, but dont forget they give them dictation too.

## A Staggering Question

FOR those who demand consistent pronunciation

This problem we've always set:  
Will you say *stajjering* or *exagg-eration*?  
And nobody's answered yet.

## Join the Army and See Life

"Fires had also been lit in that particularly comfortable little sitting-room upstairs for the benefit of those who like to keep warm while sitting-out!

It goes without saying that habitués included Major — (smartly gowned in black velvet).—*Malta Paper*.

"— appeared at Middlewich yesterday to face seven charges of demanding money with menaces from four men referred to in court as Messrs. 'A,' 'B,' 'C,' and 'D.'—*Liverpool Post*.

Poor fellows! As if they hadn't enough to cope with, filling those eternal cisterns!



"My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen—pray silence for His Whatshisname the Thingummibob of Something-or-other."



"Seen bounds?"

"No, but they caught fox all right, 'cos I 'eard 'ooter."

### Centenary

'TIS the fresh morning of the year,  
And once again the time is here  
When people in the know  
Revive for us whose minds are dark  
The incidents of note and mark  
A hundred years ago.

To such as these I gladly turn,  
And thus am privileged to learn  
That in that year of grace  
Photography first came to light;  
I doubt if that expression's right,  
But leave it there in case.

Wot well that he, th' inventive one,  
Looked lightly on the thing he'd done,  
So vague it was and dim;  
The pregnant fact that he had wrought  
A darned sight better than he thought  
Would not occur to him.

Yet from that start a Power has grown  
Which not the greatest dare disown  
Nor monarchs disavow;  
E'en smaller men can grow thereby  
Familiar to the naked eye,  
And put it over now.

So too the humblest, maid or chap,  
May by some unconsidered snap  
Enrich our lively Press,  
While, at the other end, to this  
We, to our intellectual bliss,  
Owe Hollywood, no less.

Mark well what glowing stars are these  
That please to shine, that shine to please,  
What god-like forms erupt  
Irradiate on the world-wide screen,  
What games, what goings-on are seen  
Enormously close-upped!

We may not celebrate this man,  
Yet in his way the lowliest fan  
His little best should do;  
For me, before this day decline,  
Let us fare forth, O mug of mine,  
Let us be took anew.

Yes, we will toddle out, we twain,  
And brave, as brave we must, again  
The artist's wonted shrug,  
Not sagely, as the musing owl,  
Not with our customary scowl,  
But smiling hard, my mug.

DUM-DUM.





### A WISE MAN FROM THE WEST

*Professor Roosevelt.* "I see a man with a small dark moustache crossing your path during the first few months of the year."





*"Jumble sale, my foot!"*

## Pages From My Life

II.—A Terrorist in the Nineties

ON a stormy night in March 1891 four hundred and eighty men sat round a table in a little attic in Midgley Street, S.W.40. A four hundred and eighty-first man, who by his demeanour and the fact that he alone had the correct number of buttons on his cuffs must have been the leader, stood at the head of the table making an impassioned speech. Each man wore a black felt hat, some wore as many as three, and most of them wore old mackintoshes which muffled up their swarthy features. An oil-lamp swung from the ceiling; leaflets, manifestoes and old carpet-slippers littered the table. In one corner of the room was a printing-press full of treacle. In that room a plot was being hatched that might have overturned thrones and empires.

Presently the speech came to an end and wild cheering broke out. After three or four hours, silence supervened. At a sign from the leader lots were taken. The lot fell on a small sandy-haired young man with piercing blue eyes. At first sight there was something rather odd about his appearance, due to the fact that in his revolutionary

enthusiasm he had forgotten to take the coat-hanger out of his coat while dressing that morning. Amid profound silence he received the leader's final instructions, pulled his hat over his brows and some wool over his eyes, and left the room.

The scene was the London Headquarters of the Brotherhood of the Beige Dagger. The leader was Gaspar Nauiascu, President of the Brotherhood and formerly the two hundred and seventy-fourth most dangerous man in Roumania. The chosen man was myself. My destination was Kennington Oval. In my pocket I carried a forged passport, a box of explosive cigarettes and enough cold rice-pudding to choke a dozen policemen. It was the first time I had ever been an active Terrorist, though it is true that at home I had once failed to return a book borrowed from the Public Library. All I had to do was to place some of the cold rice-pudding on a doorstep and to offer an explosive cigarette to a policeman on point-duty. I discharged these duties and returned to Midgley Street, where I found my comrades jammed in a struggling mass

in the doorway and halfway up the stairs. Ignoring the rest, Gaspar Nauiascu came forward with outstretched hand and congratulated me warmly. From that moment I became his second-in-command.

IT is too late, or too early (the principle is the same), to tell of how I had come to join the Brotherhood in the first place. Enough that I had come up to London six months before, misled by the tales of an old publisher in my native village. All my hopes of literary fame had come to nothing. One evening, on going through my landlord's pockets, I found that all I had in the world was three-halfpence, a four-penny stamp and some old tram-tickets. It is an old story. I had some previous acquaintance with Nauiascu; we had tried to borrow ninepence from each other simultaneously in Oxford Street. Weakened by poverty, I lent a willing ear to his suggestions, and at last I agreed to throw in my lot with the Brotherhood. I became a Terrorist, pledged to the overthrow of every existing institution.

There was nothing very impressive





*"Fancy your making such a fuss about half-an-hour—here!"*

about Nauiascu's appearance. He was about five feet in height, very narrow-chested, with a pale face, a drooping moustache and steel-rimmed spectacles mended with string. He had an apologetic manner and a habit of starting violently without apparent reason. Yet I have seen that slight figure face up to an angry shop-assistant or secondary-school teacher in a way that would have done credit to the bravest.

His brilliance in debate was unrivalled. I may instance a little episode which occurred during a meeting at the Albert Hall. Nauiascu had just finished speaking. Immediately questions were flung at him from all parts of the hall. A stout man in the front row asked, "Why are you a Terrorist?" Quick as thought Nauiascu countered "What?" "Why are you a Terrorist?" asked the man again, and again Nauiascu flashed back "What?" So it went on, and at the end of two hours Nauiascu still held his ground. That will give some idea of the intellectual stature of the man.

But life in the Brotherhood was not

all public meetings, or private meetings either. There were daylight raids on Paddington Station Refreshment Rooms, when a dozen cloaked figures crept along in Indian file with empty bottles in their hands, to return hours later without the bottles but with money in their pockets wrested from the bourgeoisie and with the consciousness of having struck a blow for the Revolution.

Of set purpose we bade defiance to Society, and at last Society exacted a terrible vengeance. The climax came when Nauiascu decided to hold a mass-meeting on a piece of waste ground near Hammersmith Broadway. Only two members, Nauiascu and myself, arrived at the meeting, and after a short debate we decided to adjourn to a neighbouring public-house, where Nauiascu, with the impetuosity so characteristic of him, drank two small ports. But the mischief was done. A few days later a letter was published in *The Hammersmith Clarion*.

"Can nothing be done," it read, "to stop such conduct as was witnessed the

other evening not a hundred miles from Hammersmith Broadway? Two men, obviously the worse for liquor, were heard to express sentiments of disloyalty to King and Country. We shall never get satisfactory shelters in our public parks while this sort of thing is allowed to continue. (Signed) A WELL-WISHER (Retd.)."

It was the end. Next day Nauiascu fled the country, and I had a postcard from him a week later posted from Brighton. The Brotherhood of the Beige Dagger was no more.

WHEN the true history of the 'nineties comes to be written the Brotherhood of the Beige Dagger will bulk largely in it. When next you read of the "Naughty Nineties" or feel tempted to tell for the fiftieth time how Whistler, by saying nothing for seventy-five minutes, kept all the dinner-tables of London in a roar, remember that there was another, darker side. Terror, in menacing and secret guise, stalked the streets of London. Anyhow, it couldn't afford a bus-fare.

## Murder

**W**ERE were discussing Murder. Rubble had just said how much it always delighted him on coming out of the office in the evening to see newspaper posters about people being found in sacks.

"Why?" asked Sympson. Rubble is a mild little man who has not been known to say anything stronger than "Dear me!" since the body-line controversy. Hardly the type, we all thought, to gloat over bodies in sacks.

"Of course I am sorry for the bodies," admitted Rubble, "but why I am pleased is because if there are bodies in sacks on the posters it means that Hitler and Mussolini have not been doing anything, and Mussolini and Hitler not doing anything is surely something like Paradise?"

"Talking of murder," said Sympson, "has it ever occurred to you that one of the tragedies of our so-called civilisation is that at the moment when the homicidal urge is strongest one is usually miles away from one's potential victim?"

Sympson's sentences are always a bit involved like that. He once edited a Grammar for Use in Preparatory Schools and has never been the same man since.

"I mean," he explained, "that the ordinary citizen most often feels inclined to commit murder when he is speaking on the telephone. Personally I am a man of equable temper, and the only time I really feel violent is when somebody rings me up after I have gone to bed. Honest poverty prevents my having a phone by my bed as people do on the pictures, so when the bell rings I have to traverse many yards of cold passage in my naked feet, unless by some miracle I can find my carpet slippers.

"My own method," said Juniper, "is to hide under the bed-clothes until the ringing stops."

"I used to do that myself," admitted Sympson, "until one night I was summoned to the bedside of a dying aunt who cut me out of her will because I did not arrive. Since then I have always answered night calls in the hope that one of my other aunts might be dying. But they never are. Night calls are usually frivolous and unimportant. A fellow rang me up at one A.M. last Tuesday to ask me how to get from Victoria to Victoria. He had been at a late party, I fancy, and thought he was at the wrong Victoria because the ticket-collector had a

differently-shaped moustache. If somebody had invented a method of shooting people over the telephone I should certainly have used it at that moment."

Rubble nodded. "People are always worse over the telephone than in real life," he said. "They fear no foe because they can make the most awful remarks and then ring off without listening to the reply. But there would be certain disadvantages about an invention for shooting people over the telephone."

"I don't see any," I said. "It seems an altogether admirable scheme for bringing murder within the means of the people, and surely the whole pur-

pose of civilisation is Equality of Opportunity. There are few of us who are too poor to afford a penny for a murder if we are really keen on it."

"I was thinking," said Rubble, "of what would happen if you got the wrong number. It would be irritating to telephone-shoot a stockbroker at Croydon when your victim was meant to be a coal-merchant at Dalston."

"Quite," said Sympson, "but one would take the rough with the smooth and spend another penny. Even twopence is a cheap price to pay when you are really keen on a thing, and wrong numbers would no doubt serve to check mere dilettantes."



"You gif us everything, Sair, me an' this fella easy carry all your luggages."

## At the Ski-Jump

"WINTER CAVALCADE" (EARL'S COURT)

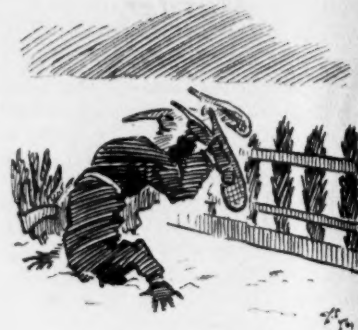
If the pioneers of British ski-ing could have been told that one day there would be an indoor ski-jump in London they would have fallen off the Alps with laughter. But here, the latest triumph of a synthetic age, is a jump long enough to allow a team of first-class skiers to show off the tricks of the game and to give beginners (in the mornings) a chance to find their legs before going abroad.

The statistics of this venture are fascinating. To quote only two, one hundred tons of ice are used every day to make the snow; and for every degree which the temperature of the building may rise—and it is bound to vary with the number of people present—an extra two tons of ice must be used. This arrives from outside sources in blocks, and, having passed through what in effect are vast mincing machines, which crush it to powder, is shot out in a powerful jet to provide a miniature snowstorm. If I owned the Alps I should have these admirable machines installed everywhere. You can always get ice out there when you want it, but I seem to remember spending my first week in a tangled

mass at the bottom of wickedly hard slopes, and my second in a stuffy hotel waiting for an eiderdown of snow to stop falling.

This jump is not of course full-size, but it is set into an extremely well-arranged mountain panorama giving an illusion of height and distance, and by the time the skiers have landed they are moving at a speed which demands sharp braking if they are not to take a header into the orchestra. It is perfectly safe, but the snow is crisp and fast, and long sweeping "Christies" are called for which are very pretty to watch. At the side of the jump is an endless rope which quickly pulls skiers to the top again, while out of sight, underneath, the Earl's Court swimming-bath does valiant service as a drip-tray.

The team has been drawn from various countries, including Great Britain; it includes a number of champions of both sexes. Their jumping is most exciting. I saw some beautiful performances carried out with a graceful take-off, a balanced flight and a landing which made the whole thing look absurdly easy. Two special jumps by SVERRE KOLTERUD, the Norwegian, are stunts but effective. In one he takes off an upward pointing slope to clear a tree; in the other he flies like a circus-lion through a hoop of stretched paper. But the circus-lion has the advantage



DEAD HEAT

in not travelling at forty miles an hour with a steep drop ahead of him.

In the Slalom Race down the face of the jump these experts show how timing and control can save the split second which brings victory. They make their turns with uncanny precision and seem to steer by the flags to within a fraction of an inch.

The idea of the promoters being to give as complete a picture as possible, there is a general demonstration of running on the level, climbing (without skins) by methods suited to varying gradients, turning and even taking stiff descents on one ski. As a comedy-turn there is also a snow-shoe race in which an Indian called PRINCE POKING FIRE distinguishes himself, and at the end the lights are lowered and the whole team come tearing down the slope on skis with burning torches in their hands. A fine sight.

In fact, the ski-ing half of the programme is so interesting that I cannot imagine why it should be preceded by a floor-show which is not a success. This is backed by a built-up set which looks like the wrong sort of chocolate-box, and although it is on a large scale it gets lost, lacking any frame and being a long way from the audience. To be fair I must add that the chorus is well drilled and that the turns, mostly of the aerial variety, would be good in the more fitting atmosphere of a circus or music-hall. But what the public are going to Earl's Court to see is ski-ing, and surely there is a whole programme to be made out of that.

Outside in the Fun Fair are much the best Dodgems I have ever come across, very speedy and of a formidable bumping power. There is also a Happy Home, with tons of china pleading to be broken up, which made me wish that one of these luxuries could be installed at Berchtesgaden and other zones of high pressure, so that the boys could let off steam without bothering anyone. ERIC.



PUTTING THEM THROUGH IT



## At the Play

"A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM"  
(OLD VIC)

WE are used to the idea of each generation giving its own interpretation of the great Shakespearean plays. I don't believe that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* has been done in modern dress, but at the Old Vic may be seen a refinement of production—an Elizabethan play produced by the twentieth century in the spirit of the early nineteenth. Much remains constant; the splendid figures of *Theseus* (Mr. ANTHONY HULME), of *Lysander* (Mr. ANTHONY NICHOLLS) and *Demetrius* (Mr. HARRY ANDREWS), richly caparisoned, clear and vigorous, and *Demetrius* particularly happy in suggesting the character of a subaltern out of his depth, are not passing fashions. *Helena* (Miss PEGGY LIVESEY), restless, stupid but engaging and peculiarly confiding towards the audience, would also fit into any comedy between SHAKESPEARE'S time and ours, and any production would be well equipped with the *Hermia* of Miss RUTH WYNN-OWEN, an assured and energetic brunette, able, like *Helena*, to get the last ounce of meaning out of the sisterly amenities which they exchange. But in the main this is, and is meant to be, a very much dated production—dated in particular by the moon over the river, which suggests romance and does not let itself be banished even in the high dawn and sunshine of the morning hunting-scene. This romantic note is deliberately brought in by Mr. TYRONE GUTHRIE because he is producing *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with MENDELSSOHN'S music, and that music, Wedding March and all, requires an early-Victorian setting.

This production leaves the spectator with a feeling that it has been rather over-fingered, that too many fresh minds have come to entertain themselves, that, in short, this play, "the dream," is so familiar in the theatrical profession that it is only fun to produce it in an unusual way. So we meet a *Bottom* who is a very capable-looking petty officer and is only the *Bottom* we expect when crowned with the ass's head, with which, happily, no sort of

liberties have been attempted. *Cobweb* and *Mustard-Seed* are good young ladies from the Victorian ballet, not at

DISTRESSING FAITHLESSNESS ON A  
MIDSUMMER NIGHT

<i>Helena</i> . . . . .	MISS PEGGY LIVESEY
<i>Lysander</i> . . . . .	MR. ANTHONY NICHOLLS
<i>Demetrius</i> . . . . .	MR. HARRY ANDREWS
<i>Hermia</i> . . . . .	MISS RUTH WYNN-OWEN



A BELIEVER IN FAIRIES

<i>Bottom</i> . . . . .	MR. EDWARD CHAPMAN
<i>Titania</i> . . . . .	MISS DOROTHY HYSON

all the sort of people who can be instructed to hop in anybody's walk or to undertake military operations, sword in hand, against honey-bees. *Puck* has the note of the bad boy of moral fiction, one in whom the horns are beginning to sprout, an imp of mischief, and *Oberon*, dressed like a large dragon-fly, looks too sinister for the extreme good nature which marks nearly everything he says and does. Of the non-mortal creation I thought *Titania* (Miss DOROTHY HYSON) the most successful. She gave the character a strong dash of wilfulness and decision.

This production goes in very much for gesture. Sometimes, as when *Hermia* and *Helena* are being kept forcibly apart, or in the tragical history of *Pyramus* and *Thisbe*, the stage becomes a sort of bear-garden. The experiment of using *Pyramus* and *Thisbe* as a kind of harlequinade was well appreciated by the audience, but then falling over on the stage always is appreciated. Mr. HENRY CROCKER is a very convincing *Peter Quince* until he reads his prologue, and Mr. FRANK NAPIER a most memorable and diverting *Thisbe*. But there is lost what can be one of the most attractive parts of a play whose humanity is one of its great

qualities, a sense of the urgency and apprehension of *Peter Quince* and company in what is for them a great and hazardous experiment. There is so much scurry and slapstick comedy that the admirable spirit in which *Duke Theseus* watches and commends a laboured performance, appears incongruous. Except for being a little young, Mr. ANTHONY HULME'S *Theseus* conveyed the hearer and ruler excellently, and Miss ALTHEA PARKER brought out in *Hippolyta* a note of well-bred assertiveness, the determination to combine extreme amiability with a refusal to be too much impressed with what *Theseus* has to show her.

In the rich setting of this Athenian Court, *Philstrate's* programme of available entertainments at the outset of a fortnight's solemnities seems pretty meagre, and *Philstrate* emerges as an official who does not know his job. It is, indeed, a far cry from his grossly insufficient preparations to the Old Vic, and the lavished thought and ingenuity of this latest version. D. W.

## A Word Here and There

**D**O you sometimes wake up in the morning with a thought rattling round and round your head with such persistence that you feel an inescapable duty to pass it on to your fellow-citizens? It may be any kind of thought, grave or melancholy or gay, but it demands to be given a chance to pierce like a searchlight through the ugly fog of the world's work.

Perhaps you don't. But I have been suffering from this a lot lately, and though I dare say the cold weather has something to do with it, it is not a responsibility to be lightly shirked.

The difficulty is to get anybody to listen. I have tried reaching out in the half-light for the telephone and dialling the operator, but this can't really be called a success.

"It's all right, Operator," I said. "That gurgling noise is only my orange-juice. I've knocked it for six. Could you spare me a moment?"

"Certainly," she answered, but for all the quiet courtesy in her voice it was clear that she took every bit as low a view of the dawn as I did.

"I suppose I can assume that the migrational urge in the puffin has never been more to you than just another of Nature's lovely mysteries?"

"Do you wish to report a defect?" she asked.

"Far from it," I cried. "The birds themselves have got everything worked out to the last flap of a wing. But it

has only this moment occurred to me that the reason why they——"

"What number?"

"Too many to count. You see——"

The phone went dead. And in any case that sort of conversation gets you nowhere, with the possible exception of a rather suburban prison.

Luckily I have hit on a much better method of getting into touch with my fellow-burgers. I have discovered that for less than a shilling a week I can hire a bit of advertising space on the Underground and, within the bounds of national expediency and what is nice, say exactly what I like to thousands and thousands of complete strangers. Why everyone doesn't do it I cannot imagine, and why Commander King-Hall hasn't tumbled to it ahead of me will never be explained.

Just think. For a trifle over a penny a day I can send

THOSE GROWING WATERCRESS  
IN WET FLANNEL SHOULD  
NOW DRY THE FLANNEL AND  
THROW IT OUT OF THE  
WINDOW

(which is what I woke up with this morning) rocketing between, say, Cock-fosters and Hounslow West. Or, if I prefer, and I think I do, I can send

IF THE YOUNG LADY WITH THE  
BLONDE HAIR WILL EXAMINE  
HER RIGHT-HAND NEIGHBOUR  
SHE WILL GREATLY FURTHER  
HER EDUCATION

hurtling all the way from Mile End to Ealing and back again.

You'll admit how enormously attractive the idea is?

In order to keep my public guessing I shall have to change the route fairly often. It may not be very easy to select combings from my morning reflections which will be equally appreciated at both ends of the line. There is no doubt, I mean, that the weary burden of my Bond Street clientèle will be immeasurably lightened when they find themselves sitting opposite

WHY SO GLUM, LITTLE DEB,  
WHY SO GLUM?

but I am not sure that it will prove such a hot number to my supporters in



"I always think that good service should be unobtrusive—don't you?"



*"I can't think why you don't knit. It would give you something to do while you're talking."*

the Wapping district, to whom something more straightforward, like

WHEN THINGS ARE SLOW  
TRY WIRING A BLOATER TO  
YOUR BROTHER-IN-LAW'S  
CYLINDER-HEAD

should have a more sympathetic appeal. But obviously I can't expect the conductor of the carriage to keep dodging in and out changing my remarks to suit the train's immediate cargo, however decent a fellow he may be. And as my aim, apart from getting rid of these morning encumbrances, will be to take the minds of my public off the lamentable circumstances of modern life, the other-worldly enchantment of

THE ELDERBERRY IN ITS LAIR  
IS JOYOUS ALMOST EVERY-  
WHERE

will probably prop up as many sagging lids as the sharper tonic note of

THIS MONTH GRANDMOTHERS  
SHOULD BE CAREFULLY OILED  
AND PUT ASIDE

What I want to do, you see, is to send my public back into the busy stream above-stairs with their egos twanging smoothly and their hearts in tune with the hedgerows or oysters or whatever else fits best into their personal conception of pure beauty; and whether I am being uplifting, as in

ONE LITTLE SMILE A MINUTE  
STREWS SEA-URCHINS ALL THE  
WAY

or

LETTUCES HAVE MOTHERS, TOO

or helpful, as in

UMBRELLAS FOR PICKLING  
ARE BETTER MOISTENED  
WITH A CAPFUL OF SAND

I feel I shall succeed.

One week, as a social experiment, I shall display an article I once wrote on a way of getting rid of cigar-ash. It will be printed upside-down in the smallest type I can find, and I shall spend a day in my carriage with a packet of sandwiches noting in a big ledger what occurs. Should this one prove a trifle highbrow, I may follow it up with

ELEPHANTS IN ARMS MUST  
HAVE SEPARATE TICKETS

It depends how I wake up. ERIC.



### Notes for the Cuffs

—Or those whose long sojourn South of the Tweed has to a great extent anglicised their thoughts and speech but has not relieved them of the responsibility of proposing the Immortal Memory at the local exiles' Burns' Supper.

Mr. Chairman, my Lords,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Unaccustomed as I am to  
public speaking

This charming and delight-  
ful assemblage

In these troublesome times,  
etc.

In a world overshadowed by  
dictators

Guid Freens Ane and A'

O what a panic's in my  
breastie

Fair fa your honest sonsie  
faces

That gars the notes of dis-  
cord squeel

Till daft mankind aft dance  
a reel

In gore . . .

Though hundreds worship  
at his word

He's but a coof for a' that.

The man o' independent  
mind

He looks an' laughs at a'  
that.

This friendly gathering

represents all that demo-  
cratic liberty stands for . .

I bid you charge your glasses  
and pledge the Immortal  
Memory, etc.

And drouthy neibors  
neibors meet

Whisky and freedom gang  
thegither

Tak aff your dram.

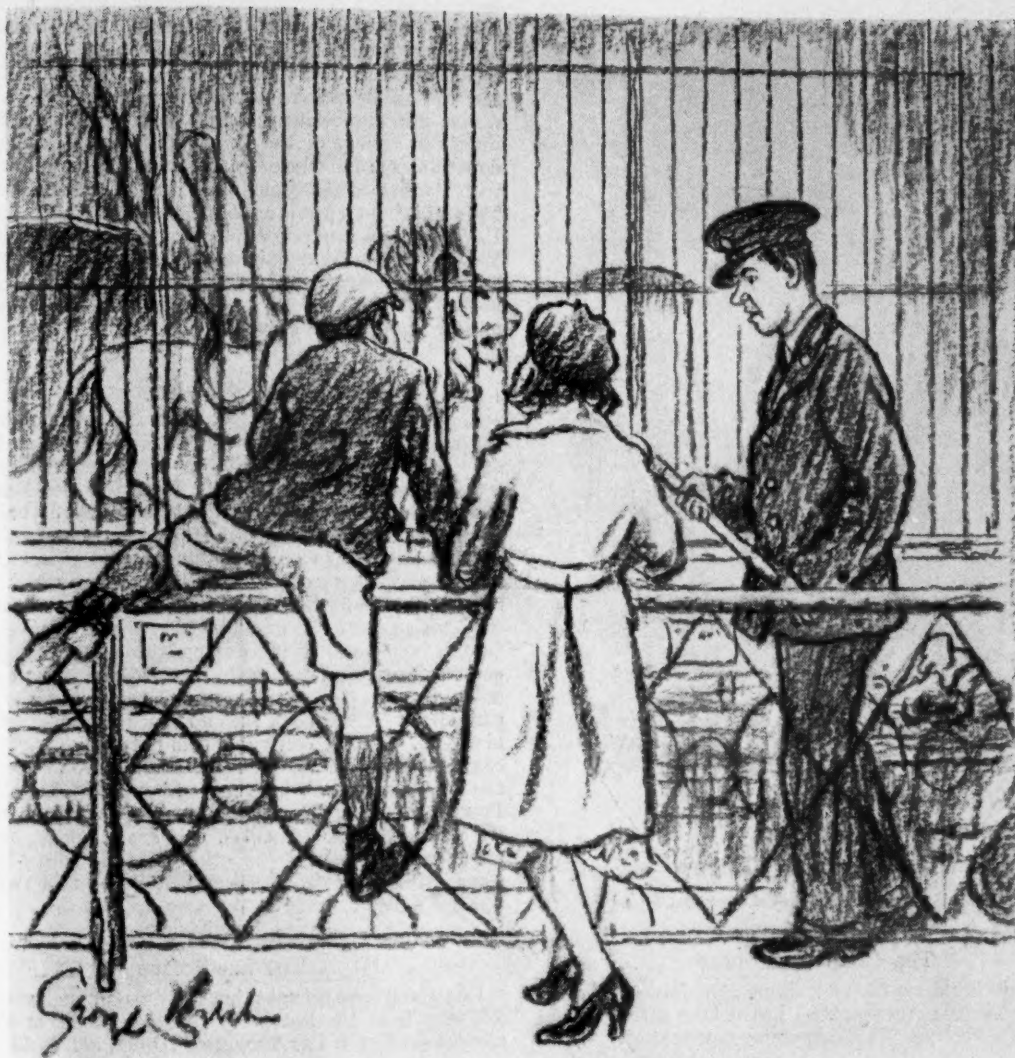
### The Artificial Tape Manufacturers and the Import Duty Advisory Committee

ONE day some Artificial Tape Manufacturers resolved to suffer wrong no more from cheap Artificial Tape imported from Ruritania. They accordingly engaged the services of a Willing Solicitor and ultimately brought to birth the Artificial Tape Manufacturers Association of Great Britain. Thus fortified by corporate consciousness they made representations to the Tariff Advisory Committee as provided by 22 Geo. 5, Ch. 8, praying that the Duty on Artificial Tape should be quadrupled. Thereupon a number of Importers of Artificial Tape, solidified by this sudden adversity into the Association of Artificial Tape Importers, made urgent representations to the Tariff Advisory Committee requesting that the status quo should be maintained. In the fulness of time the Tariff Advisory Committee received deputations



"Jolly seasonable weather—what!"  
"We'll have to pay for it later on."

G. F. Hardy  
1939



*"Nobody not on the menu ain't allowed inside the barrier."*

from both sides, heard witnesses and called for documents, and in due course came to the conclusion that importations of Artificial Tape from Ruritania were completely undermining the British article. They were actually on the point of making appropriate recommendations to the Treasury with respect to a substantial increase of duty on Artificial Tape when a polite reminder filtered through the usual diplomatic channels to the effect that any such increase would involve Artificial Tape from Campania and would be a breach of the Anglo-Campanian Trade Agreement of 1928. The only alternative being a discriminating duty on Artificial Tape from Ruritania, which would involve contravention of the mutual non-discrimination clause of the Anglo-Ruritanian Trade Agreement of 1929, the Tariff Advisory Committee had no other course open to them but to withhold their recommendation in order to give the

matter further consideration. Some years later progress was facilitated by a fortuitous circumstance. The Government of Ruritania, which had only a unilateral regard for international agreements, found it convenient to exercise wanton discrimination against British Braces, and the Tariff Advisory Committee seized its opportunity. A recommendation was made to the Treasury that the Duty on Artificial Tape imported from Ruritania should be suitably increased, and the Treasury, as soon after as might be, made an Order in pursuance of this recommendation. By this time however those who had succeeded the original applicants had long since abandoned Artificial Tape manufacture as a hopeless proposition, partly owing to Ruritanian competition but chiefly because Artificial Tape had gone out of fashion, and were now making gun-cotton.

*Moral: TEMPUS FUGIT.*

### Notes for the Cuffs

—OF those whose long sojourn South of the Tweed has to a great extent anglicised their thoughts and speech but has not relieved them of the responsibility of proposing the Immortal Memory at the local exiles' Burns' Supper.

Mr. Chairman, my Lords,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Unaccustomed as I am to  
public speaking

This charming and delight-  
ful assemblage

In these troublesome times,  
etc.

In a world overshadowed by  
dictators

Guid Freens Ane and A'

O what a panic's in my  
breastie

Fair fa your honest sonsie  
faces

That gars the notes of dis-  
cord squeel

Till daft mankind aft dance  
a reel

In gore . . .

Though hundreds worship  
at his word

He's but a coof for a' that.  
The man o' independent

mind  
He looks an' laughs at a'  
that.

This friendly gathering

represents all that democ-  
ratic liberty stands for . .

I bid you charge your glasses  
and pledge the Immortal  
Memory, etc.

And drouthy neibors  
neibors meet

Whisky and freedom gang  
thegither

Tak aff your dram.

o o

### The Artificial Tape Manufacturers and the Import Duty Advisory Committee

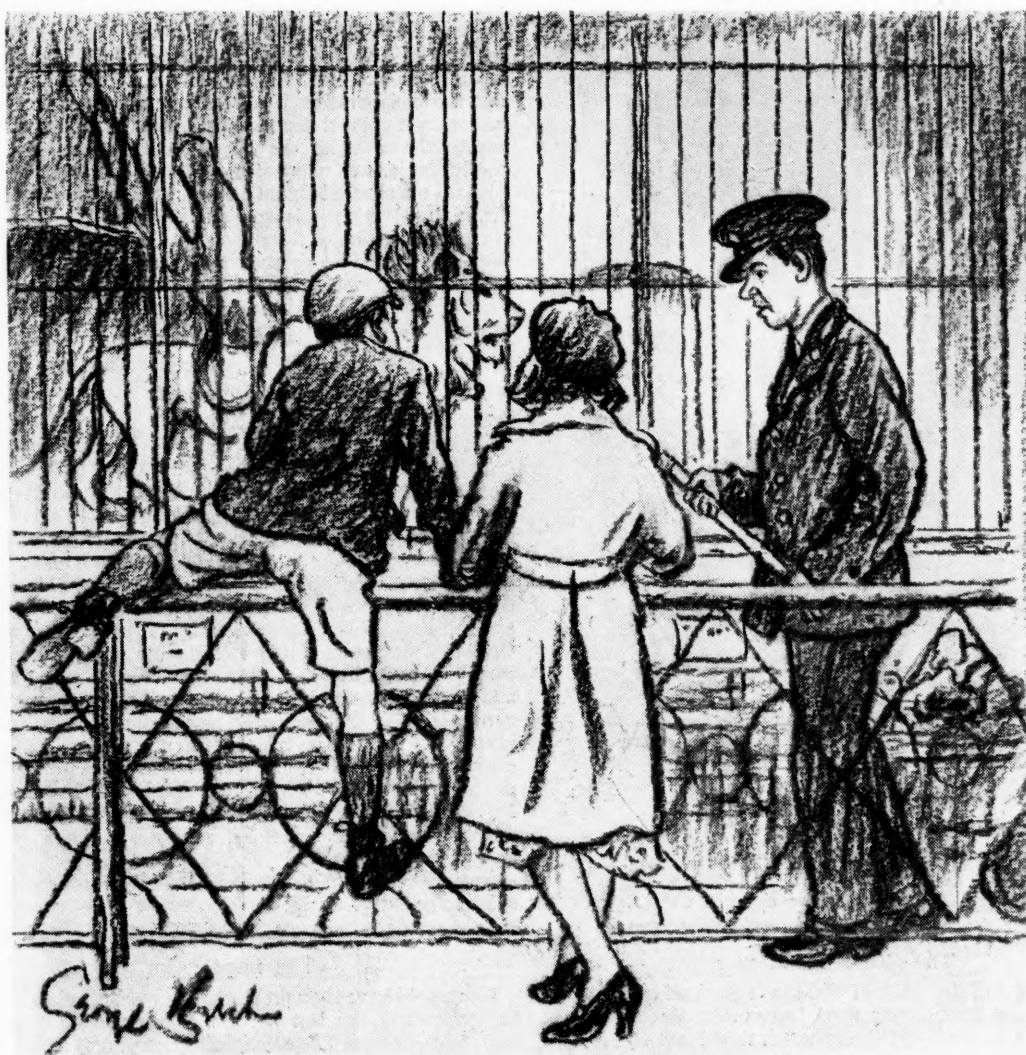
ONE day some Artificial Tape Manufacturers resolved to suffer wrong no more from cheap Artificial Tape imported from Ruritania. They accordingly engaged the services of a Willing Solicitor and ultimately brought to birth the Artificial Tape Manufacturers Association of Great Britain. Thus fortified by corporate consciousness they made representations to the Tariff Advisory Committee as provided by 22 Geo. 5, Ch. 8, praying that the Duty on Artificial Tape should be quadrupled. Thereupon a number of Importers of Artificial Tape, solidified by this sudden adversity into the Association of Artificial Tape Importers, made urgent representations to the Tariff Advisory Committee requesting that the status quo should be maintained. In the fulness of time the Tariff Advisory Committee received deputations



"Jolly seasonable weather—what!"  
"We'll have to pay for it later on."

G. P. Fraser  
189



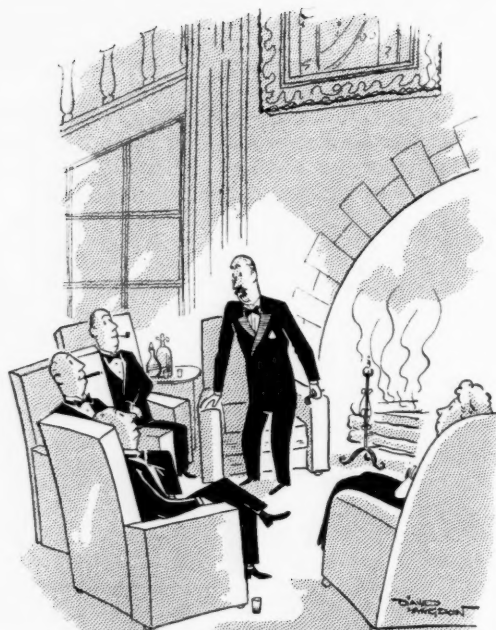


*"Nobody not on the menu ain't allowed inside the barrier."*

from both sides, heard witnesses and called for documents, and in due course came to the conclusion that importations of Artificial Tape from Ruritania were completely undermining the British article. They were actually on the point of making appropriate recommendations to the Treasury with respect to a substantial increase of duty on Artificial Tape when a polite reminder filtered through the usual diplomatic channels to the effect that any such increase would involve Artificial Tape from Campania and would be a breach of the Anglo-Campanian Trade Agreement of 1928. The only alternative being a discriminating duty on Artificial Tape from Ruritania, which would involve contravention of the mutual non-discrimination clause of the Anglo-Ruritanian Trade Agreement of 1929, the Tariff Advisory Committee had no other course open to them but to withhold their recommendation in order to give the

matter further consideration. Some years later progress was facilitated by a fortuitous circumstance. The Government of Ruritania, which had only a unilateral regard for international agreements, found it convenient to exercise wanton discrimination against British Braces, and the Tariff Advisory Committee seized its opportunity. A recommendation was made to the Treasury that the Duty on Artificial Tape imported from Ruritania should be suitably increased, and the Treasury, as soon after as might be, made an Order in pursuance of this recommendation. By this time however those who had succeeded the original applicants had long since abandoned Artificial Tape manufacture as a hopeless proposition, partly owing to Ruritanian competition but chiefly because Artificial Tape had gone out of fashion, and were now making gun-cotton.

*Moral: TEMPUS FUGIT.*



"Wait—let me throw some more logs on the fire, settle myself comfortably in my chair, puff silently at my pipe for a space, and then I'll begin my story."

### Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

### The Great Commoner

THE new full-dress life of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 20/-), has at least three eloquent claims to a hearing. It incorporates new material; it disposes of old material in the light of modern knowledge—on the psychological side a very great gain indeed; and the situation of England when PITT took over the conduct of the Seven Years' War had so many crucial similarities to the situation to-day that the story of the man who said he could save the country—and very largely did—has the most encouraging of repercussions on a dejected outlook. There is not one dull or undignified page in this admirable biography; and if Mr. BRIAN TUNSTALL is a Pittite to the core it can well be forgiven him. It is true that GEORGE III. had in some respects a shrewder estimate of the national character and the national interests than his great and detested minister. Yet, given the health he so tragically lacked, PITT, who complained that "the public slept quietly under the tyranny of the House of Commons" and that "the Constitution was a shadow," might have done as much for England as he did for India and Canada.

### Young Explorers in Borneo

The Oxford Expedition to Sarawak, 1932, consisted of eight young men with an average age of twenty years.

Their valuable scientific results are mostly published in separate papers. The present generously-illustrated volume, *Borneo Jungle* (LINDSAY DRUMMOND, 15/-), contains an account of the affair for the general reader. There are five separate writers, including the editor, Mr. TOM HARRISON, and the collaboration is a complete success. The elderly reader soon appreciates the advantages of this modern and improved variety of the Grand Tour. Such competence, determination and whole-hearted living contrast favourably with the outmoded languid inspection of Continental centres. Mr. HARRISON's pen is agile and his mind singularly acute. He furnishes a masterly apologia for himself and his team. We are left loudly applauding their characters, their aims and their achievements. Deeply interesting for its subject-matter, this book is also a tonic for those who were beginning to despair of Britain's youth.

### The Shrubbery

Shrubs, according to Mr. MICHAEL HAWORTH-BOOTH, are the supreme horticultural passion. Herbaceous borders cede to rockeries, and rockeries to *The Flowering Shrub Garden* (COUNTRY LIFE, 10/6). Even the late REGINALD FARRER was veering, so to speak, shrubwards before his death. Given that what Mr. HAWORTH-BOOTH calls "the artist-gardener" is more desirable than the man or woman who just grows good things well—a fallacy which only a rich and (horticulturally-speaking) idle country can afford—the shrub-garden is undoubtedly a sound proposition. Once it is well started its running costs are low; and if you can only get going on a strip of woodland, your expenses and difficulties are notably diminished. For the artist-gardener, then, this book with its alluring photographs is an ideal gift. For the cultivator it is not perhaps sufficiently comprehensive. More, one feels, might have been made of the possibility of growing shrubs from seed. A well-known French firm has a special catalogue of *Graines d'Arbres et d'Arbustes*, and its camellias, coluteas, genistas, mimosas and berberises—not to mention Mr. HAWORTH-BOOTH's soundly-recommended *Pittosporum Tobira*—take to English soil like ducks to water.

### The Laodiceans

One would have thought that there was enough war fiction left over from the last party to deter the most bellicose romantic. Yet, if *The Stronghold* (DENT, 8/6) is not meant as a deterrent, it is difficult to see much point in this new recapitulation of the woes of non-combatants during 1914-18. An exceptionally self-centred young clerk seeks



"Watch closely now, Janet, and see how I turn out a blancmange."



#### A TRUE SPORTSMAN

"How BEAUTIFULLY THAT HORSE JUMPS!"

A. C. Corbould, January 20th, 1894.

to escape from the Civil Service into a more creative sphere by taking his medical exams. in his spare time. He is financed by his mistress—a girl who would be his wife, but as she is a Civil Servant herself her income depends on her celibacy. To John Quickshott and Dorothy Sinnier the War comes as an additional complication in already complicated lives. They neither approve it nor condemn it, but treat it with much the same brand of disgruntled resignation that most of us accord to a bout of influenza. Couple this uninspiring outlook with Mr. RICHARD CHURCH's passion for surgical details—obstetrical for choice—and you have a novel that seems definitely to have missed what

market still remains for a commodity that has nearly always suffered acutely from over-production.

#### Dramatic Survey

"Poets," says Mr. HERMON OULD in *The Art of the Play* (PITMAN, 7/6), "will victoriously enter the theatre again when the world realises that without them the theatre is a body without a soul." In his belief that this healthy process has begun he is encouraged by signs of a reaction against realistic dialogue and by the notable success of *Murder in the Cathedral*. The book is in part a discussion of the



qualities that go to make a good play and in part a review of the lines of development being taken by the experimental dramatists of to-day. It does not pretend to be comprehensive, but it gives a clear picture of where the more substantial outposts stand, and should be of interest both to those who go to the theatre and those optimistic enough to try to write for it. Few will disagree with Mr. OULD's assertion that the modern child can be given no better antidote against the growing menace of mechanical entertainment than plenty of imaginative acting.

### In Praise of a Novelist

The hard lot of those who bravely set out to write biography is that, unlike the rest of us who can merely take off our hats to worth and stand silent, they are bound to tell us why they think it is worth and to seek to convince those of us who do not agree with them. Under this impulse EVELYNE WHITE, the editor of *The Schoolmistress*, has written a thoughtful and painstaking book in *Winifred Holtby As I Knew Her* (COLLINS, 8/6), but the effect is rather as though one tried to convey the glory of a fine building by giving its measurements. She is sometimes also a little unlucky in her expressions—as, for instance, "She pierced the false emptiness with which so many lives are filled." The book, however, has the merit of sincerity, and the warmth of reasoned and deserved admiration, and Mrs. WHITE's descriptions of WINIFRED HOLTBY's novels and short stories, and particularly of her last and greatest novel, *South Riding*, are likely to send many of her readers to make or renew their acquaintance at the first possible opportunity.

### Up at the Hall

It is difficult to place *July at Fritham* (RICH AND COWAN, 7/6), which opens rather like an apology for feudalism—a mild counterblast to *The Country House*—and ends as a not very successful thriller. Its characterisation is careful and interesting, but one has only to compare the *Frithams* with the *Pendyces* to grasp the odds between pleasant honest journeyman work and a masterpiece. Mr. MICHAEL HOME, however, has not entirely confined himself to producing a more attractive and up-to-date variant of Mr. GALS-WORTHY's squirearchy. His parson is equally old-fashioned, but with a difference; he has been typically prodigal with elderly aunts; and the close corporation of the pre-War

novel has here been further invaded by local parvenus in the persons of the *Mayer* household and by the Dominions as happily embodied in *Clarice Bevan* (of *Fritham* antecedents) from New Zealand. The Continental incursion that threatens the whole stability of the family is less convincingly staged; and one has a regretful idea that the problem of rural relations, so ardently broached in the first few chapters, has been shelved when it proved too exigent to determine.

### A Terrific Battle

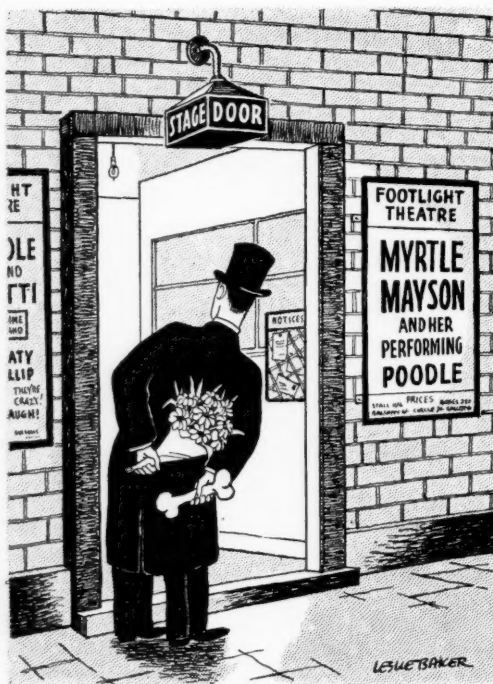
Herr F. SCHAUECKER's *The Armoured Cruiser* (MASSIE, 7/6), which has been ably translated from the German by A. KATHERINE BARLOW, is described as a "naval romance of the Great War." But so vividly is the glorious history of this warship told, and so liberal is the author in recording the experiences and impressions of her gallant crew as the ship found herself overwhelmed by the enemy, that surely one must be right in believing that here is fiction very strongly based on fact. The naval battle that is so graphically described ended in the destruction of this absolutely up-to-date cruiser, but it did not end in the defeat of the German navy. This tale can be recommended not only for the technical details that must make it of special interest to sailors, but also because it contains a pleasing little love-affair and is told throughout with a conspicuous lack of prejudice.

### Hot Work

If the mystery in *Before the Wind* (NELSON, 7/6) is not likely to prove in the least puzzling to experts in detection, it is quite certain that anyone in search of alarms will find them in this macabre yarn. The cruising liner *Alhambra* arrived at an island in the Caribbean where a charming girl was due to visit some relations. These relatives of hers, of whom a terribly dominating old lady was the most remarkable, had lived all-powerfully in the island for many years, and their reign had been one of prolonged tyranny over the natives. Ghosts and a hurricane play their parts in a tale that once again shows that for startling incident and tense atmosphere Mr. ERNEST F. CHARLES can hold his own with any sensational novelist of to-day.

### That's a Good Girl

"A report in Rome last night said that the Duce will withdraw all her volunteers from Spain if Britain grants belligerent rights to Franco."—*Sunday Paper*.



NOTICE.—Contributions or Communications requiring an answer should be accompanied by a stamped and addressed Envelope or Wrapper. The entire Copyright in all Articles, Sketches, Drawings, etc., published in "PUNCH" is specifically reserved to the Proprietors throughout the countries signatory to the BERNE CONVENTION, the U.S.A., and the Argentine. Reproductions or imitations of any of these are therefore expressly forbidden. The Proprietors will, however, always consider any request from authors of literary contributions for permission to reprint.

CONDITIONS OF SALE AND SUPPLY.—This Periodical is sold subject to the following conditions, namely, that it shall not, without the written consent of the publishers first given, be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of by way of Trade except at the full retail price of 6d.; and that it shall not be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of in a mutilated condition or in any unauthorised cover by way of Trade; or affixed to or as part of any publication or advertising, literary or pictorial matter whatsoever.